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AUTHOR Tinari, Frank D.
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ABSTRACT

The W. Paul Stillman School of Business at Seton Hall University has implemented a model standardized annual Faculty Development Plan (FDP). A form was developed to collect data from each faculty member. The form is divided into the areas of teaching, research, and service, with several questions in each area asking faculty to specify their goals and plans for the academic year and the extent to which they attained previous goals during the past year. The goals of the FDP have been to increase faculty productivity, to encourage faculty to plan for innovations and commitments all during the academic year, to assist in resource allocation, to provide management information to school administrators, and to serve as a basis for faculty evaluation. Though the form could be the basis for institution-wide faculty evaluation, faculty showed strong resistance and concerns about eroding prerogatives, fair evaluation across disciplines, and increased bureaucratization. Strengths and weaknesses of using such a development plan are outlined. Appendixes contain original and revised forms of the FDP. (JB)

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A Foundation for Faculty Evaluation: The Annual Development Plan

Frank D. Tinari, Ph.D.
Professor of Economics
Seton Hall University
W. Paul Stillman School of Business
South Orange, NJ 07079
201 / 822-0084 (phone) -0081 (fax)
TINARI@LANMAIL.SHU.EDU

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Frank D. Tinari

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Introduction

Faculty evaluations at Seton Hall, as at many other institutions of higher learning, encompass a number of tools and procedures. These include use of student course evaluations, peer evaluations, and evaluations by chairmen and deans. All such forms of faculty evaluation make use of both internal and external standards of performance. External standards are particularly important in evaluating the quality of faculty research activity. For example, published articles in peer-reviewed journals provide a direct measure of the worth of the activity or outcome. In fact, publication of such articles continues to be a major factor in promotion and tenure decisions, even at institutions professing a primary teaching mission.

Other faculty activities, especially those associated with and embodied in the teaching process, pose challenging faculty evaluation issues. Advocates of what might be called the total quality management philosophy of education focus upon student learning outcomes and attitudes. In their view, the only teaching that is effective is that which enhances student learning. Teaching methods, structures, and institutions are simply means to an important end. Thus, measurement and evaluation of faculty effectiveness relies on measures of student academic attainment and measures of student opinions and attitudes. However, careful analysis of student outcomes ultimately leads back to examination of alternative teaching methodologies, to consideration of what does and does not work. Moreover, measurement of student outcomes is not particularly easy, nor is associating improved student learning with the teaching process especially seamless.

Alternatively, a perspective closer to the management-by-objectives philosophy emphasizes the setting of teaching goals and then measuring faculty performance against the yardstick of goal attainment. Here, the outcomes are faculty and process outcomes, and may be viewed as indirect measures of teaching effectiveness. But key questions remain regarding this approach: How and by whom are goals established? How is goal attainment measured? One potentially fruitful method for evaluating teaching, service, and certain forms of intellectual

AE 028 127

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contributions incorporates use of an annual faculty development plan. Such a plan provides institutions, primarily through a faculty member's academic department, faculty-initiated benchmarks against which the progress of the individual specifying the benchmarks may be measured.

This paper presents a model annual development plan presently in use at Seton Hall University. The form used for the plan is standardized and deals separately with teaching, research, and service. The next section of the paper explains the form and how it is administered. Specific items that are included on the form are discussed and critiqued. The section that follows examines the advantages and disadvantages of using a faculty development plan. Finally, the paper concludes with an exploration of the role played by such a plan within a broader faculty evaluation program.

The Faculty Development Plan

Appendix A contains a copy of the Faculty Development Plan (FDP) form used last academic year at the W. Paul Stillman School of Business of Seton Hall University. At this time, no other college or school of the University makes use of this or any other standardized faculty development plan. Reasons for this difference are explored later in this paper.

Prior to the commencement of the academic year, the Business School dean sends to each full-time faculty member a copy of the FDP form with a cover letter that explains its purposes. The letter states that the completed plan will contain the individual faculty member's goals for the academic year, that "it serves as a basis for making research assistant assignments, travel approvals, etc.", and gives a specific deadline for submission, typically about ten days prior to the start of the fall semester. In addition, the dean's letter for 1993-94 stated that the dean would meet with both the faculty member and his/her Department Chair during the first two weeks of September to discuss the faculty member's goals. The process applies to tenured and untenured faculty members, and across all professorial ranks.

The FDP form is divided into three areas: teaching, research and service, which coincide with the three criteria by which the University decides on tenure and promotion applications. Under the teaching area of the form, the faculty member is expected to respond to the following question: "What are your goals for improving your teaching during the 1993-94 year?" The question is accompanied by a paragraph elaborating on specific teaching dimensions that reflect the goals of the Business School, as follows: "Are you requiring students to work in teams as active participants in the class? How have you improved your syllabus since the last time you taught the course? Are you covering ethics and international business issues, integrating computing and library/writing projects in your courses?"

In the research portion of the form, three sections must be completed by the faculty member: areas of research interest, intellectual contributions, and travel plans. The second section asks the following questions: "What are your goals for making intellectual contributions this year? (Are you planning to engage primarily in applied, instructional/pedagogical, or theoretical research? Is your research related to the courses you teach?) What manuscripts or work do you currently have under review? List your research in progress. List your possible future articles." The third section, travel plans, asks for the name of the conference/meeting, destination, purpose and approximate cost.

Under the service area, the following questions are asked: "What are your goals for the service area? What service will you provide that focuses on our students and their needs? Will your service truly make a meaningful contribution to the School of Business, the University, the business and professional community, to the community-at-large?"

Clearly, the form is open-ended and allows for a diversity of approaches and methodologies among the faculty. At the same time, it helps faculty members focus their responses by including suggested questions to be answered.[1] Having said that, we turn to an examination of the purposes and effectiveness of using a faculty development plan.

Goals of the Faculty Development Plan

We next examine the explicit and implicit goals of the FDP. The primary purpose is to improve faculty productivity, presumably by having faculty think explicitly about their activities for the coming year and how they might be improved or enhanced. But the timing of the distribution of the form seems to reduce the likelihood of attaining this goal. Consider that faculty receive the form in early August and are asked to submit it about two weeks later. Is it expected, therefore, that syllabi improvements, teaching innovations, research projects, and service activities be planned for the entire academic year in a period of two weeks in August? Naturally, that is an unrealistic expectation. Nevertheless, with the very title of the form being "faculty development", it is reasonable to ask how the FDP form submission process promotes faculty development. The answer, I believe, lies in the long run. Once an FDP process becomes institutionalized, then the faculty learn to plan for innovations and commitments all during the academic year.

For the short-run, however, there may still be ways to use the FDP so as to focus the faculty's attention on immediate improvements. A change in the timing of administering the form may improve the likelihood of this occurring. One possibility is to distribute the form at the end of the Spring semester, with a letter

reminding faculty that they should keep their own and the School's goals in mind during the summer as they think about their courses, syllabi, etc., and that the form should be completed by mid-August. For institutions contemplating introduction of a faculty development plan process, it would be wise to distribute the form in October and to offer a seminar to faculty regarding the purposes and uses of the plan. As a dry run, faculty could be asked to begin filling out the form for the following academic year. This would encourage faculty members to think in advance about their research, teaching and service agendas.

Another stated purpose is to help the dean determine the allocation of the School's scarce resources, i.e., graduate research assistants, travel monies, and other resources. Yet, travel funds are allocated on the basis of first-come, first-served during the year as faculty apply for funding authorization to present papers at professional conferences. Thus, it is not clear how the FDP aids in this process. On the other hand, faculty travel funding intentions, if aggregated by the dean's office, would provide a rough measure of budgetary travel expense needs for the year. However, the dean has very limited ability to increase travel funding even if it were determined that the current budget may be inadequate. Moreover, since the budget year begins July 1st, some portion of available travel funds would have already been expended by faculty presenting papers during July and August.

In a recent discussion with the individual who was acting dean during the 1993-94 academic year, I was informed that some faculty members had listed a large number of conferences which they planned to attend. Thus, during the personal interview and review of the FDP of the faculty member and his/her department chairman at the beginning of the fall semester, the dean informed the faculty member that a listing of travel intentions is no guarantee of funding, and that travel funds are limited. Consequently, the travel plans section of the FDP was helpful to the dean in modifying the expectations of some faculty that might otherwise have led to disappointment and frustration later in the academic year.

When a new dean and associate dean were appointed this year, changes were made in the FDP form, which had not been changed substantially for several years. (See Appendix C for the revised form.) The dean's letter was now on e-mail but the distribution date was, again, in August. In the teaching section of the form, instead of asking for a faculty member's "goals for improving your teaching", nine subsections and/or questions are given. These items shift the emphasis from a faculty member's prospective goals to a dual perspective -- on what the faculty member has done and is doing with respect to various pedagogical objectives, and on what the faculty member intends to do. This change appears to be a positive improvement because it requires faculty members to identify the teaching methodologies they are presently using prior to expounding upon proposed innovations.

In the research section of the FDP form, the three former subsections have been replaced by ten items. Again, many of the items request information on past accomplishments in terms of publications, presentations, etc. The former question asking about the faculty member's goals in the area of intellectual contributions has been replaced by several specific questions such as "Please explain the role of conference presentations in your research strategy."

It is interesting to note that one new item deals with consulting, something that has never been included in the FDP used at the School of Business. During the past year, the new dean and many of the faculty discussed a new direction for the School in terms of greater business-academic cooperation, and the need to provide an education that is in touch with current business practices. Thus, consulting has taken on a new light, as reflected in the following item on the form: "List any significant consulting projects that you have worked on in the past year. Relate the projects to the courses that you teach." It is not evident how such an emphasis will promote the development of this dimension of those faculty members who are not involved in consulting, but it certainly provides information to the School's administration regarding the faculty who are involved in consulting work.

Finally, the service section of the form requests more pointed information than previously. Again focusing on past activity, the item includes the following request: "Please make sure you supply a) the name of the committee you worked on, b) the significant accomplishments of the committee, and c) your contributions to the committee." The form then asks for the faculty member's "service goals" for the coming year.

Based on the preceding discussion, we are able to identify two other goals that seem to be built into the revised FDP form. The first is the provision of management information to the School's administrators. From course teaching preferences to travel funding needs, from publication citations to consulting work, the FDP form provides a comprehensive annual statistical summary of the activities and achievements of the School's faculty. A second goal is the use of the FDP as an evaluation mechanism.

The Role of the FDP in Faculty Evaluation

An implicit purpose of the FDP process is to serve as a means of faculty performance evaluation. Although the literature clearly distinguishes between processes that serve the purpose of faculty development and those that assist in faculty evaluation, the FDP easily could be used for evaluation purposes. This would be accomplished, presumably, by an end-of-year review of the actual activities of the faculty member in comparison to his/her goals as stated in the FDP form for that academic year. As of the present time, this has not yet been done on

any formalized basis. Last year some department chairmen did review the forms in conjunction with a review of the activities of faculty members in their department, but the practice is not universal. Should it be decided that faculty evaluation is to be accomplished, in part, by use of the FDP, then it would be necessary to ensure equity across departments by evaluating all faculty in like manner.

When we scrutinize the revised FDP form, we realize that one new aspect is the series of questions asking faculty members to self-evaluate the extent to which they attained their own teaching and research goals.during the past year. Faculty self-evaluation is often touted as a needed component within a broad package of evaluation tools, but too infrequently implemented in any systematic way. With the revised FDP form we observe that each faculty member is asked to reflect on his/her annual plan of activities to determine the extent to which success has been attained. This mechanism is also a way of subtly directing faculty to set achievable goals. This appears to be a positive change because it now provides an opportunity for self-evaluation which was entirely missing from the previous version of the FDP form.[2]

Strengths and Weaknesses of Using a Faculty Development Plan

One of the key strengths of the FDP form is that helps faculty members organize in a concrete fashion their thoughts about their professional goals. And this is not done in a vacuum but is set within a framework of the school's broader goals such as encouraging the use of audio-visual materials in courses or promoting the inclusion of particular themes in courses such as the ethical dimensions of each course's subject matter. The process also generates a historical record for both faculty self-reflection and institutional self-appraisal. In fact, the process fits squarely within the domain of outcomes assessment and could be incorporated readily into the broader institutional self-examination that is required by regional accreditation bodies.

Another positive aspect of use of the FDP form is that it fits nicely with evaluation of post-tenure faculty. With its focus on continuing self-development, and removed from the tenure/promotion process, the FDP can serve as a non-threatening mechanism for encouraging continuous improvement and innovation.[3] The prior dean mentioned to me that he met with a faculty member who had made numerous paper presentations at various professional conferences over a period of several years, but had not published any of these. Thus, the dean's discussion focused on ways in which both the school and the faculty member could assist in converting presentations to published articles.

Unfortunately, a major problem is that follow-up is weak. At present, no formal report is required of either the faculty member or the department. Granted,

filling out the FDP is time-consuming and follow-up reporting would simply add to the administrative overhead. Once established, however, the process could be made more manageable by requiring it on a two-year rotating cycle where, in any given academic year, half the faculty would be submitting FDPs and end-of-year reports.

The revised form, the reader should recall, contains retrospective questions that could be viewed as self-reporting of a faculty member's achievements and progress towards goal attainment. However, there is no requirement to attach, for example, published articles, samples of a faculty member's teaching-related work, or thank-you letters for committee accomplishments. Such a portfolio would comprise a necessary component of faculty evaluation and should go into the faculty's permanent file. It would probably be more effective, therefore, to pull out many of the retrospective questions now included in the revised FDP and use them to develop a separate self-evaluation form that would be accompanied by a faculty member's portfolio for the year.

It was mentioned earlier that, at this time, no other college or school of the University makes use of this or any other standardized faculty development plan. Last spring, a workshop on faculty development plans and portfolios was presented by a business school faculty member for department heads and other interested faculty. Although there was implied interest by the respectable attendance level, strong resistance was exhibited by several faculty members at the suggestion of University-wide adoption of the FDP process. Apparently, the main concern was that the form and its attendant meetings and follow-up would burden faculty members with what is perceived as essentially more bureaucratization imposed by the administration. Some lamented the difficulty of meeting with students, doing research, grading papers, etc. within their available time, and argued that another piece of required paperwork would not enhance their teaching or research productivity.

Another concern was that faculty prerogatives would be eroded by forcing every faculty member into a single "mold" and use of a standardized form. Granting this as a real faculty concern, an institution would do well to enlist the faculty in the design and implementation of a FDP by forming a task force solely for this purpose. It is well to remember, however, that the relatively few complaints from Business School faculty who have been using the FDP for a number of years indicates that the process, once incorporated into the annual work of the faculty member, is both manageable and rewarding.

Finally, strong resistance was exhibited to any use of a weighted scale in which points would be assigned to attainment of each of the three components of the FDP, so that a total (weighted) numerical valuation could be developed for each faculty member. Although the weighting would be determined by each faculty

member, reflecting his or her goal priorities, the faculty present at the workshop said that was too subjective, that self-selection of weights would undermine broader University goals, and that assigning points to activities that are highly individualized and subjective in nature would be imprecise and could restrain faculty innovation.

Analysis and Recommendations Regarding the FDP

To make more effective use of the required Faculty Development Plan, it is recommended that a four-pronged evaluation process be incorporated to include a) periodic peer classroom visits, b) a classroom visit by the department chairman, c) self-appraisal at the end of the academic year, based on the faculty member's self-development goals set at the beginning of the academic year, and d) a faculty member's written interpretation and commentary of the results of student course evaluations. Ideally, such interpretation could be incorporated into his/her self-appraisal. Moreover, for the peer and chairman classroom visits, the department should develop a standardized form to facilitate the evaluations.

Use of the FDP at an institution not only indicates a commitment to systematic measurement and evaluation of faculty progress but also requires that the institution put into place mechanisms and structures that enhance faculty attempts at improving their productivity. For example, the institution should offer skill-improvement workshops for the faculty. These could be in-house presentations by outside experts, perhaps for several departments at once (for cost effectiveness). Topics covered by the workshops could include a) how to run committees for greater effectiveness, b) how to make use of multimedia/computer delivery of information, and c) review and critique of the increasing number of computer course tutorials, simulations, etc. that have become available, primarily through publishing companies.

ENDNOTES

1. It may strike some readers that the FDP is similar to a Teaching Portfolio. Indeed, there are many similarities, especially that both approaches require descriptions of what the individual faculty member hopes to achieve during the academic year and generally emanate from the personal and professional interests of the faculty member. However, the emphasis in the teaching portfolio approach is, obviously, the teaching component of a faculty member's professional work, and it emphasizes the gathering of documentary materials. For more information, see Russell Edgerton, Patricia Hutchings & Kathleen Quinlan, *The Teaching Portfolio: Capturing the Scholarship in Teaching*, American Association for Higher Education, Washington, DC, 1991.

2. One caveat is in order. The new teaching questions and several in the other sections of the form were squeezed into tight spaces on their respective pages, thereby leaving little room for anything other than minimal responses in the spaces provided. Perhaps that is why the e-mail letter from the dean included a copy of the form which could be readily modified on computer. So, given that the electronic version of the form embodies no space limits to speak of, it is puzzling why the printed form was provided in such a truncated format without mention of the flexibility allowed if one were to use the electronic form.

3. For more on this subject, see Christine M. Licata, *Post-tenure Faculty Evaluation: Threat or Opportunity?*, ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 1, 1986.

APPENDICES

A. Faculty Development Plan Form

B. Letter from Dean to Faculty

C. Revised Faculty Development Plan Form

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
W. PAUL STILLMAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Faculty Development Plan

NAME:

DEPT:

Period Covered: Fall 1993 to	Spring 1994

TEACHING

I. What are your goals for improving your teaching during the 1993-94 year?

(Are you requiring students to work in teams as active participants in the class? How have you improved your syllabus since the last time you taught the course? Are you covering ethics and international business issues, integrating computing and library/writing projects in your courses?)

COMMENTS: (Include such things as teaching innovations, development projects [Buddy, CCT, etc.], seminars).

RESEARCH

I. AREAS OF RESEARCH INTEREST (list all that apply)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

II. INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

What are your goals for making intellectual contributions this year? (Are you planning to engage primarily in applied, instructional/pedagogical, or theoretical research? Is your research related to the courses you teach?)

What manuscripts or work do you currently have under review?

Research in progress:

Possible future articles:

III. TRAVEL PLANS: - (If you have already submitted this information, please attach a copy.)

Name of Meeting	Destination	Purpose	Approximate Cost

SERVICE

I. SERVICE ACTIVITIES--What are your goals for the service area? What service will you provide that focuses on our students and their needs? Will your service truly make a meaningful contribution to the School of Business, the University, the business and professional community, to the community-at-large?

Seton Hall University
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

August 5, 1993

Professor Frank Tinari

Dear ~~Professor Tinari~~ Frank:

Enclosed is a Faculty Development Plan to be completed by ALL faculty members in the School of Business. This plan represents *your goals for the 1993-94 academic year*. Your development plan should be completed **immediately (but no later than August 20th) and returned to me** since it serves as a basis for making research assistant assignments, travel approvals, etc. I will discuss these goals with you and your Department Chair during the first two weeks of September.

I want to share some thoughts about each area of the Faculty Development Plan with you. As you complete your plan remember that our goal is to be the premier business school in the State of New Jersey in five years ("First in Five"). This means that individual goals must be high. Our "managing by doing" model argues that we need to be active role models for our students; we need to provide the opportunity for our students to be active learners in a supportive environment.

Teaching: Are you requiring students to work in teams as active participants in the class? How have you improved your syllabus since the last time you taught the course? Are you covering ethics and international business issues, integrating computing and library/writing projects in your courses?

Intellectual Contributions: What are your research goals for the year? Are you planning to engage primarily in applied, instructional/pedagogical, or theoretical research? Is your research related to the courses you teach?

Service: Is your service focused on students and those activities that can truly make a meaningful contribution to the School.

I believe that all of us need to pay more attention to our *teaching*, *service* to our students, and the *business community*. We need to set our sights higher and expect more from ourselves and our students. Let's work together to make this a very productive year for our School.

Sincerely,

Nicholas J. Beutell, Ph.D.
Acting Dean

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
W. PAUL STILLMAN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

NAME: **DEPT:**

DATE:

Period Covered: Fall 1994	Spring 1995

I. TEACHING

1. **List the courses in your department that you feel qualified to teach:**

UNDERGRADUATE

1.
2.
3.
4.

GRADUATE

1.
2.
3.
4.

2. **List the different courses in your department that you have taught over the last two years.**

UNDERGRADUATE

1.
2.
3.
4.

GRADUATE

1.
2.
3.
4.

3. For each of the courses that you teach give a brief description of how computers are used (if at all) to facilitate learning.

4. Do you assign group projects in any of your graduate courses? Please specify.

5. Do you assign case studies in any of your graduate courses? Please specify.

6. i) Based on your student evaluations for the past year, briefly summarize what your students consider to be your strong and weak points.

ii) Do you agree or disagree with their assessments? Explain.

7. What goals do you have (be specific) for the next year with respect to:

i) Expanding the range of courses that you teach?

ii) Expanding your use of computers?

iii) Expanding your use of group projects?

iv) Expanding your use of case studies?

v) Improving your teaching performance and Student Evaluations?

8) What teaching innovations (if any) do you intend to introduce in your courses in the coming year?

9) How well have you satisfied last years teaching goals? Explain.

II. RESEARCH

1. **Areas of Research Interest (List all that apply)**

   1.

   2.

   3.

   4.

2. **For the period September 1993 through August 1994 give full citations (including joint authorship), for each of the following:**

   A. REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES (in print or fully accepted)

   B. REFEREED PROCEEDINGS

   C. CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

   D. BOOKS/BOOK CHAPTERS

   E. OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

3. **List any Grants you received in the past academic year.**

4. **List any papers that you currently have under review. For each paper include a) the title, b) the reviewing party (i.e. name of journal, conference etc., c) how long it is under review, and d) the number of times it has been submitted for review.**

5. **List current projects that you are working on which you intend to complete and submit for peer review in the coming year. For each project include a) its tentative title, and b) the targeted journal, conference etc.**

6. **Have any of your publications been incorporated into any of the courses you teach? Please Specify.**

7. **Please explain the role of conference presentations in your research strategy.**

8. **What are your travel plans for the upcoming academic year? For each trip please explain your choice of conference and destination.**

Name of Meeting	Destination	Purpose and Justification	Approximate Cost

9. **List any significant consulting projects that you have worked on in the past year. Relate the projects to the courses that you teach.**

10. **How well have you satisfied last years research goals? Explain.**

III. SERVICE

1. **Describe your service activities to your department, the School of Business, the University, and the Community, for the past academic year. Please make sure you supply a) the name of the committee you worked on, b) the significant accomplishments of the committee, and c) your contributions to the committee.**

UNIVERSITY

1.
2.
3.
4.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

1.
2.
3.
4.

DEPARTMENT

1.
2.
3.
4.

COMMUNITY

1.
2.
3.
4.

2. **List your service goals for the upcoming academic year?**